

REMARKS

This application has been carefully reviewed in light of the Office Action dated December 29, 2005. Claims 1 to 4 and 6 to 20 are pending in the application, of which Claims 1, 6, 7, 13, 15, 17 and 20 are independent. Reconsideration and further examination are respectfully requested.

Claims 1 to 20 were objected to for informalities. Specifically, Claims 1 to 20 were objected to for allegedly using improper terms for antecedent basis, and Claims 14 and 16 were objected to for failing to use "The" in the preamble. In this regard, the claims have been amended giving due regard to the points raised in the Office Action.

Withdrawal of the objections is therefore respectfully requested.

Claim 13 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 101 for allegedly being inoperative. In this regard, Applicants believe that the Office Action intended to address Claim 12, as Claim 13 does not recite the language mentioned in the Office Action. At any rate, this objection is traversed. Claim 12 clearly states that the data storage means is removable, partially or totally. Claim 12, does not, however, state that the data storage means, once partially removed, can be read by a computer or microprocessor. Nonetheless, without conceding the correctness of the rejection, and solely in an effort to advance prosecution, Claim 12 has been amended to remove the phrase "partially or totally".

Withdrawal of this rejection is therefore respectfully requested.

Claim 13 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph, for allegedly failing to comply with the written description requirement. Specifically, the Office Action alleged that a "partially removable" data storage means is not reasonably conveyed by the specification. Applicants believe that this rejection was also intended to be directed towards Claim 12. The rejection is traversed. In particular, the specification provides

clear support for this feature at, for example, page 5, lines 6 to 9, which recite “a data storage means which is removable, partially or totally, and which can be read by a computer and/or a microprocessor storing instructions of a computer program[.]”

Nonetheless, without conceding the correctness of the rejection, the amendment to Claim 12 is believed to render this rejection moot. Withdrawal of the rejection is therefore respectfully requested.

Claim 13 (Claim 12) was also rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph, for alleged failure to comply with the enablement requirement. Specifically, the Office Action alleged that a “partially removable” data storage means is not described in the specification in such a way as to enable one skilled in the art to make or use the invention. This rejection is also traversed. In particular, it is notorious in the art that a data storage means may be partially removable. Again, without conceding the correctness of this rejection, the rejection is now believed to be moot due to the amendment to Claim 12. Withdrawal of this rejection is therefore respectfully requested.

Claims 1 to 20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, for allegedly being indefinite. Specifically, the Office Action alleged that the claims were “generally narrative and indefinite”. The rejection is traversed. In this regard, the Examiner is respectfully reminded that the purpose of examination is not to secure grammatical perfection; see MPEP § 608.01(g):

“Necessary grammatical corrections, however, should be required by the Examiner, but it must be remembered that an examination is not made for the purpose of securing grammatical perfection.” (Emphasis added.)

Here, it is not felt that the Office Action’s concerns with the claims are such that changes thereto are “necessary grammatical corrections”, especially since the

technological sense of the specification and the drawings is clearly understood.

Nonetheless, without conceding the correctness of the rejection, amendments have been made to the claims which are believed to address some of the specific concerns raised in the Office Action. Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

Claims 1 to 20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) over “IRC-38 Infrared Receiver Product Information” (IRC-38). Reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection are respectfully requested.

Claim 1

The invention of Claim 1 is directed to a method of managing a communication network including a sub-network having communication nodes interconnected by links conveying digital signals, and a plurality of hosts, the hosts being able to exchange data via the sub-network, and the communication nodes including data and control interfaces for exchanging data and operating commands with hosts to which they are connected. The method includes transmitting a search signal from a first communication node to a second communication node of the sub-network, the search signal containing information representing technical features of a host to be actuated from the first communication node, the transmission being performed in accordance with instructions from a remote control. The method also includes identifying a candidate host that is connected to the second communication node and that has technical features compatible with the technical features contained in the search signal, and starting up the candidate host by means of the control interface of the second communication node to which the candidate host is connected. Based on the result of the starting up, if the candidate host proves not to be the host to be actuated, a search signal is transmitted once again in order to continue the search, whereas, if the host does prove to be the host to be

actuated, operating commands are sent to it by means of the control interface, which also interrupts the search.

In contrast, IRC-38 is not seen to disclose the features of Claim 1, and in particular is not seen to disclose or suggest at least the features of (i) a search signal containing information representing technical features of a host to be actuated from the first communication node, (ii) transmitting a search signal from a first communication node to a second communication node of the sub-network in accordance with instructions from a remote control, (iii) identifying a candidate host, after transmitting the search signal, that has technical features compatible with the technical features contained in the search signal, (iv) starting up the candidate host by means of the control interface of the second communication node to which the candidate host is connected, in order to obtain a result of whether the candidate host proves to be the host to be actuated, (v) if the candidate host proves not to be the host to be actuated, transmitting a search signal once again in order to continue the search, and (vi) if the host does prove to be the host to be actuated, sending operating commands to the host by means of the control interface, which also interrupts the search.

Page 11 of the Office Action asserts that IRC-38 (page 1) discloses transmitting a search signal containing information representing the technical features of a host to be actuated. Specifically, the Office Action appears to equate the “infrared codes” in IRC-38 with the search signals of the present invention. Applicant respectfully disagrees with this characterization, for the reason that the infrared codes of IRC-38 are not seen to suggest anything to be searched at all. In particular, in IRC-38, the device to be controlled has already been identified by the device by recognizing the code set, such as NEC, RC5 or

Sony. (See IRC-38, page 1). For example, the IRC-38 recognizes Sony's "Power On" signal. (See IRC-38, page 1).

As such, it is not seen how these codes are seen to disclose a search signal containing information representing the technical features of a host to be actuated, as recited in Claim 1.

Accordingly, IRC-38 is also not seen to disclose or suggest transmitting that search signal from a first communication node to a second communication node of a sub-network in accordance with instructions from a remote control.

Page 11 of the Office Action asserts that IRC-38 discloses identifying a candidate host, which may be the host to be actuated on the basis of compatibility between the technical features of the candidate host and the technical features indicated in the search signal. However, as mentioned above, in IRC-38, the device to be controlled has already been identified by the device by recognizing the code set. Accordingly, IRC-38 is not seen to disclose or suggest identifying a candidate host, after transmitting a search signal, that has technical features compatible with the technical features contained in the search signal.

Accordingly, IRC-38 is also not seen to disclose or suggest the feature of, if the candidate host proves not to be the host to be actuated, transmitting a search signal once again in order to continue the search, and the feature of, if the host does prove to be the host to be actuated, sending operating commands to the host by means of the control interface, which also interrupts the search.

Accordingly, Claim 1 is believed to be in condition for allowance, and such action is respectfully requested.

Claim 6

The invention of Claim 6 is directed to a communication node that forms part of a communication network comprising a sub-network having communication nodes interconnected by links conveying digital signals, and a plurality of hosts able to exchange data via the sub-network. The node includes at least one data interface for connection to a host to exchange signals, at least one control interface to transmit operating commands to the host, and a unit for supplying signals representing these operating commands received from other nodes to the control interface, wherein the unit supplies the signals based on the data interface connected to the host.

IRC-38 is not seen to disclose or suggest the features of Claim 6, and in particular is not seen to disclose or suggest at least the feature of supplying signals representing operating commands received from other nodes to a control interface, wherein the unit supplies the signals based on a data interface connected to the host.

Page 14 of the Office Action asserts that IRC-38 (page 1) discloses receiving infrared codes from a source remote control and converting them to output signals. In this regard, IRC-38 is seen to disclose that these output signals depend only on the received infrared codes, as they are converted from those codes. (See IRC-38, page 1). In contrast, the invention of Claim 6 supplies signals representing operating commands received from other nodes to a control interface based on the data interface connected to a host.

Accordingly, Claim 6 is believed to be in condition for allowance, and such action is respectfully requested.

Claim 7

The invention of Claim 7 is directed to a communication node that forms part of a communication network comprising a sub-network having communication nodes interconnected by links conveying digital signals, and a plurality of hosts to exchange data via the sub-network. The node includes at least one receiver to receive operating commands intended for any host in the network, and a unit to produce signals representing these operating commands and being transmitted to other nodes, wherein the unit produces the signals based on a technical feature of the host.

IRC-38 is not seen to disclose or suggest the features of Claim 7, and in particular is not seen to disclose or suggest at least the feature of producing signals representing operating commands and being transmitted to other nodes, wherein the signals are produced based on a technical feature of the host.

In particular, as noted above, IRC-38 is seen to disclose that its output signals depend only on the received infrared codes, as they are converted from those codes. Accordingly, IRC-38's output signals are not seen to be based on the technical features of a host.

Therefore, Claim 7 is believed to be in condition for allowance, and such action is respectfully requested.

Claim 13

The invention of Claim 13 is directed to a communication node that forms part of a communication network comprising a sub-network consisting of communication nodes interconnected by links conveying signals, and a plurality of hosts being able to exchange data via the sub-network. The node includes means for comparing technical features indicated in a received search signal with technical features of a host to which the

node is connected, and a control interface that starts up and operates the host based on a comparison result by the comparing means.

IRC-38 is not seen to disclose or suggest the features of Claim 13, and in particular is not seen to disclose or suggest at least the features of (i) receiving a search signal with technical features of a host to which the node is connected, and (ii) starting up and operating a host based on a comparison result of comparing technical features in the search signal with technical features of a host to which the node is connected.

Specifically, as noted above, IRC-38 the infrared codes of IRC-38 are not seen to suggest anything to be searched at all, as in IRC-38, the device to be controlled has already been identified by recognizing the code set. Therefore, IRC-38 is not seen to disclose or suggest receiving a search signal with technical features of a host to which the node is connected. Accordingly, IRC-38 is also not seen to disclose starting up and operating a host based on a comparison result of comparing technical features in a search signal with technical features of a host to which the node is connected.

Therefore, Claim 13 is believed to be in condition for allowance, and such action is respectfully requested.

Claim 15

The invention of Claim 15 is directed to a communication node that forms part of a communication network comprising a sub-network consisting of communication nodes interconnected by links conveying digital signals, and a plurality of hosts to exchange data via the sub-network. The node includes means for transmitting to all nodes in the network a search signal containing information representing technical features of a host to be actuated, and means for sending operating commands to said host to be actuated.

IRC-38 is not seen to disclose or suggest the features of Claim 13, and in particular, is not seen to disclose or suggest at least the feature of transmitting to all nodes in a network a search signal containing information representing technical features of a host to be actuated.

In particular, as noted above, IRC-38 is not seen to disclose or to suggest a search signal containing information representing technical features of a host to be actuated at all. Accordingly, IRC-38 is not seen to disclose or suggest transmitting such a signal to all nodes in a network.

Therefore, Claim 15 is believed to be in condition for allowance, and such action is respectfully requested.

Claims 17 and 20

The invention of Claim 17 is directed to a communication apparatus. The apparatus includes a wireless communication means for wirelessly communicating with another wireless communication apparatus, a wired communication means for communicating with another apparatus, receiving means for receiving, by the wireless communication means, instruction signals for instructing to search for an apparatus possessing a predetermined technical feature, and searching means for searching, by the wired communication means, the apparatus possessing the predetermined technical features based on the received instruction signal.

Claim 20 is directed to a method substantially in accordance with the apparatus of Claim 17.

IRC-38 is not seen to disclose or to suggest the features of Claims 17 and 20, and in particular is not seen to disclose or to suggest at least the features of (i) receiving, by wireless communication means, instruction signals for instructing to search

for an apparatus possessing a predetermined technical feature, and (ii) searching, by the wired communication means, the apparatus possessing the predetermined technical features based on the received instruction signal.

Specifically, as noted above, IRC-38 is not seen to disclose or to suggest a search signal at all, much less the above-noted features.

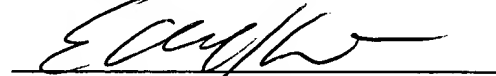
Accordingly, Claims 17 and 20 are believed to be in condition for allowance, and such action is respectfully requested.

The other claims in the application are each dependent from the independent claims discussed above and are therefore believed to be allowable over the applied references for at least the same reasons. Because each dependent claim is deemed to define an additional aspect of the invention, however, the individual consideration of each on its own merits is respectfully requested.

No other matters being raised, the entire application is believed to be in condition for allowance, and such action is courteously solicited.

Applicant's undersigned attorney may be reached in our Costa Mesa, California office at (714) 540-8700. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below-listed address.

Respectfully submitted,



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